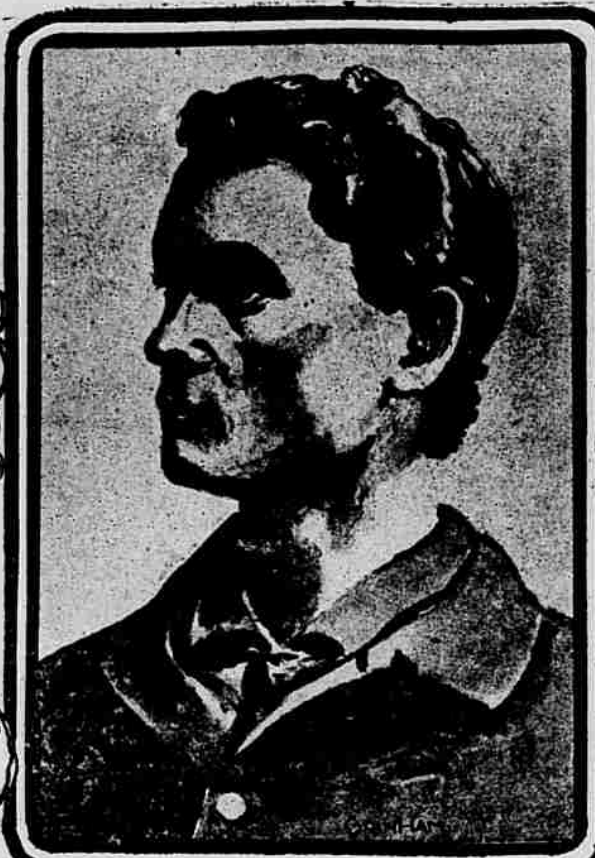


TERMINATING THE FAMOUS KUKLUX BANDS THAT HAVE OPERATED FOR YEARS IN THE MOUNTAINS OF KENTUCKY.



CREED POTTER'S MOUNTAIN HOME.



MORGAN REYNOLDS, ALLEGED AUTHOR OF THE KLU KLUX BANDS OATH.



DWELLING PLACE OF THE REYNOLDS BOYS.



WILD BILL, CINCINNATI MAN, WHO HAS BEEN HUNTING FOR THE BAND.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

Lexington, Ky., July 6.—For an instant only, on the crest of the ridge, a man's body stood out clearly against the sky.

The crack of a rifle, a whirling mass of flesh and bone, a fatal wound.

Death came a few hours later. The marksmanship was a trifle nervous and the bullet through the victim's body had not touched the heart.

And this was another incident in the fight against the Klu Klux in Letcher County, Kentucky. Bill Wright, Jr., of the posse hunting the outlaws had made a mistake. He showed himself above the ridge and the act cost him his life. John Reynolds of the outlaws, from a position behind an oak not a dozen yards away, had fired the fatal shot. He and his brother, Noah, had glanced down the sights of their weapons once before when a Wright was in front, and the Wright that time was "Old Man Bill," father of the lad who got his death wound upon the ridge. "Old Man Bill" sleeps with his father. Like the son, he too made a mistake. He was a little slow in drawing and the price of the blunder was the same in each instance. But there was a sequel to the son's death, a bloody battle following immediately on the firing of the shot. The other members of the posse joined in the fight and the outlaws were not to fight, but only after a struggle such as has been rarely seen in the mountains. The fight against the Klu Klux was nearing an end and the outlaws were making a last and desperate stand.

The odds had been seven to one. Now they were only two. The posse that had come out to search for the men who were being arrested was composed of John Wright, the veteran mountain detective, with twenty-seven notches on his gun handle; Bill Wright, Jr., and Gerrard Wright, his cousin and sons of "Old Man Bill." Hop Gibson, John Henry Elkins, Jim Neal and a detective who called himself "Wild Bill." On the other side were John Reynolds and Creed Potter, and more daring men, better shots and cooler heads could not be found in that section, noted for just such characteristics in its inhabitants. The officers knew that they were in the territory of the Reynolds faction. From the crest of the ridge where Bill Wright fell could be seen down in the winding valley a little red brick house, 15 feet by 10. The little house has since become famous. It was here that a band of desperate men for days bade open defiance to the officers of the law. It holds a story that it will never tell.

John Wright, the grizzled veteran of mountain warfare, had warned his men, but they had not heeded his advice. "Stay here," he said, "while I go 'round and see if I kin ketch any sign of them fellows." He had hardly gone fifty yards, accompanied by two of his men, when the impatient Bill Wright, nothing more than a boy of 17, stepped above the ridge. A rifle shot called John Wright's division back to the scene. Gerrard Wright and John Henry Elkins were close upon Bill Wright's heels, and the boy fell in agony almost at his brother's feet. "Bill's done for," said Gerrard quietly, and, dropping to his knees, commenced pumping bullets from his Winchester at the man who had slain his brother. Hop Gibson came up just as Creed Potter began shooting, and the duel opened between them. Both of the outlaws were firing from behind trees, although the stinging bullets of the Wright faction, which scattered the bark on either side, kept them constantly dodging.

John Henry Elkins can give thanks that he came out of the battle with only four wounds. For him there was a romance entwined in this tragedy. He was engaged to be married to the sister of young Bill Wright, and the picture of the brown-eyed little mountain girl, weeping for her dead brother, fired him to deeds of reckless daring. His sole purpose was to kill John Reynolds, no matter what the cost. He fired one or two shots from his rifle at the man hiding behind the tree, and then cast it aside. Drawing his heavy army Colt, he leveled it, with both arms out stretched, mountain fashion, and with his head crouched between his shoulders, so that he could look along the sights, advanced toward the oak tree that sheltered Reynolds. A Winchester bullet relieved him of his hat, but still he advanced, until within a few feet of the tree. A bullet aimed at the heart struck his revolver, and, glancing, wounded him in four places. It bent the cylinder and the weapon was useless, because it would no longer revolve. Elkins started back toward his rifle, and just then the other members of the posse came into view on the ridge. They entered the fight with alacrity, and the outlaws, outnumbered, were forced to retreat. Creed Potter fled, with four bullet holes in his clothes. John Reynolds stayed a few seconds longer. He backed away from tree to tree. For the twinkling of an eye, just before he disappeared behind a bowlder, he and John Wright, his mortal enemy, covered each other with their weapons. Reynolds's Winchester ball clipped a piece from Wright's hat, not an inch from the left temple. Almost at the same time his own right arm fell useless at his side.

The posse had fared badly. Bill Wright was taken to a cabin three miles away, but survived only a few hours. Neal had a wound in the side which was then thought to be fatal, but he will recover. The glancing bullet had wounded Elkins in four places. Thus ended the most notable fight during the hunt for the Klu Klux in the mountains of Letcher.

The Klu Klux of the mountains are much as were the Klu Klux in the more advanced sections of the State immediately after the Civil War. They are a band bound together by a solemn oath, and they pretend to regulate morals of the community. Men and women are taken from their homes at night by masked men and whipped or otherwise maltreated for real or alleged wrongdoing. Often they receive warning to leave the county. For the last twenty-five years

nothing of this kind has been known in the central section of the State, but it has moved to the mountains where the people are more backward in development. The home of the feud gave the Klu Klux a hearty welcome, for it was a ready method of paying old scores without having the enemy get wind of the true perpetrators.

In Letcher County the Klu Klux had been quiet for some years until October, 1899, when a band of men met up on Rockhouse Creek in an isolated spot near the wreck of a railroad still. There were just thirteen in the party, and following their rude notions of the proper ceremony on such an occasion they assembled on Friday at midnight and took the Klu Klux oath. It had been written for them by an almost illiterate schoolmaster and was read by the light of a dim stable lantern. Here it is:

"I swear by God Almighty, by heaven, his home, by the earth, his foot rest, and by hell, his prison home, to befriend and hold in the sacred bonds of brotherhood all members of the band. I swear that I will lie for them, steal for them, fight for them, die for them. I will be hanged in all out to pieces and salted rather than inform on them. If they are in trouble I will give up everything I have to save them. I swear to obey my captain in all things even to killing my kin folks. And if in any way I break this oath, I hope God may strike me dead in my tracks. And if he lets me live, may I be cut in pieces by the members of the band and may my whole life be damned."

The band began operations at once. Neil Hall, supposed to have caused trouble in the family of "Bill" Lucas, was taken out and whipped. Sarah Clinch and America Holman also received the attention of the Klu Klux for like alleged wrongdoing. George Sexton, an enemy of one of the band, was beaten with hickory sticks. Delle Craft, supposed to be a great friend of Sam Wright, was treated in a similar fashion, but Sam came upon the scene not ten minutes after the Klu Klux had gone. He took a short cut, caught them just as they were riding through the ford of Boone's Fork, and in the bright moonlight opened fire from behind a bowlder. Two dead horses and some blood on the river bank was the result.

One of the horses was identified as was the wealthiest man in Letcher. By that of Bland Combs. Wright had identified industry and good management he had some of the men in the moonlight and a cumulated \$30,000 in the logging business. dozen are followed. Combs got away on He lived on the adjoining farm to the the promise of joining the army, and in now Reynolds boys—John and Noah. They in the Philippines. The other indictments quarreled. The Wrights say the Reynolds were fired away on good behavior. This was jealous of the old man's success. The ended the first band of Klu Klux in Letcher. Reynolds say that Wright was overbearing. The county was allowed to remain in and insulting. Both say that they had a peace only a few months. Bill Wright, Sr., quarrel about a poplar tree which Wright

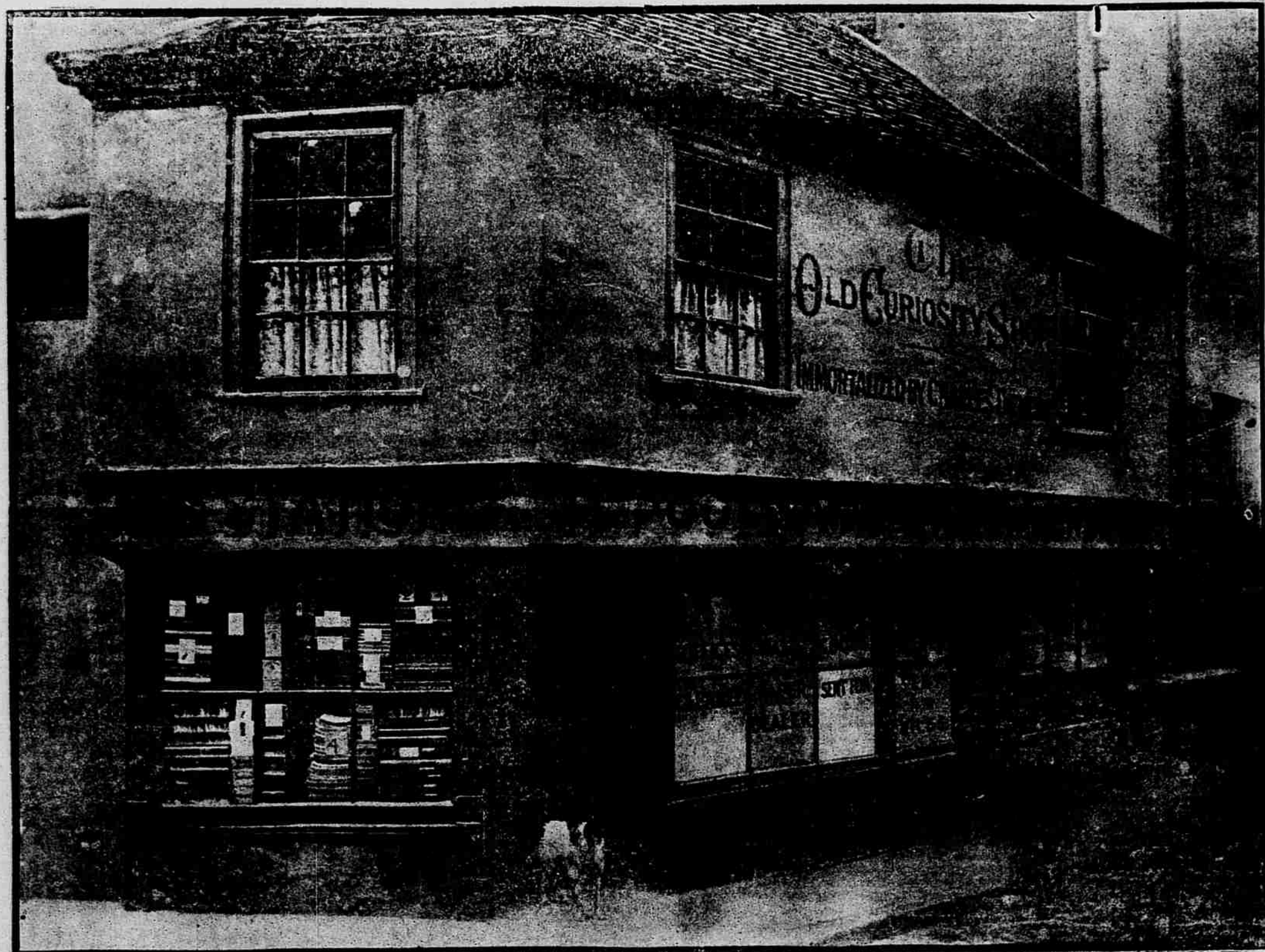


JOHN W. WRIGHT, NOTED MOUNTAIN DETECTIVE WHO LED THE PURSUIT.



MISS MINA HALL, WHOSE DEATH IS CHARGED TO THE KLU KLUX BAND.

LITTLE NELL'S HOME WILL STAND ONLY IN FAME.



THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP IN LONDON, MADE FAMOUS BY DICKENS. IT IS SOON TO BE TORN DOWN.

intelligence that the original of Charles Dickens' "Old Curiosity Shop" is to be torn down to give place to a modern structure. It is said by those who watch the sight-seers that no place except the Tower attracts so many intelligently interested visitors as this queer little place that lives in the memory of every reader of Dickens as the home of Little Nell and Grandfather. Looking into the old-fashioned windows

from the street, one can imagine how the impossible Quilp, back of one of them, lay and gurgled in the tiny bedroom of Little Nell while she and her grandfather stole out and away from the sorrow that had cast so deep a shadow over them.

"The place," says Dickens, "was one of those receptacles for old and curious things which seem to crouch in odd corners of this town, and to hide their musty treasures

might have groped among the churches and tombs and deserted houses and gathered all the spoils with his own hands. There was nothing in the whole collection but was in keeping with himself; nothing that looked older or more worn than he."

The queer old place has been turned into a waste-paper shop in recent years, but has never lost that curious appearance which must have originally attracted the novelist.

JUDGES WOMEN BY THE WAY THEY CARRY UMBRELLAS.

The man who sat nearest the window said he didn't mind the wet weather. "It gives me a chance to see how people carry their umbrellas," he said. "I have such firm faith in my umbrella deductions that I wouldn't be afraid to choose a wife with them for a guide."

The woman on his left smiled. "I'm glad I'm not out there in the street," she said. "You'd be picking out all the kinks in my disposition along with the rest of them."

"Oh," said the man, "I sized you up a long time ago. You carry an umbrella when it's rained, just like that woman across the street. You grab it in the middle and go foraging ahead with the ends of the handle digging into the unfortunate pedestrians who go before and follow after."

"And what does that signify?" asked the woman on the left.

"Alertness, activity, selfishness and inconsideration," said the man. "That woman in the gray skirt is a yes-and-no sort of person. She wants to agree with everybody, and follows wherever led. Women who carry their umbrellas with the point backward and downward are always unassertive."

"But just look at that girl who spins along swinging her umbrella around in a circle as if it were a magic wand. I like her. She's jolly and good-natured and gets more pleasure out of life than ten ordinary people. There's a woman carrying her umbrella swinging across her shoulder like a shotgun. She's a true soldier of fortune and was never known to say die. I can't think of anything that would faze her."

The man paused. "And what would you say," asked the woman, "about that girl who carries her umbrella horizontally across the small of her back and catches either end into the crook of her elbow?"

"Well," admitted the man, "she is a new one on me. I never met her before, but I wouldn't be afraid to wager that she is conscientious to a degree and has a heart as big as all outdoors. But here," he added, "comes the most even-tempered woman of the lot. She carries her umbrella protectively under her arm as if she doesn't want it to get hurt in the crowd. That woman is gentle and thoughtful and kind."

The Master of Life.
I am the plow,
Master of Life,
Where my sharp coulters leads
Ceases sterility,
And, by my largeness
Gladdened and satisfied,
Follow the people!
I, in the glimmering dawn,
Furrowing circles—
Leaving wide gaps where Death
Swung his black gates anon—
Trace the foundations, where
Rose the proud battlements,
Bastions and walls round
The City of Life!
To me for charity
Come the worn mendicants,
Footling it painfully
Out from the darkness
Into the silence—
Here are my arms for you
Poured forth abundantly—
Yours while the earth knows
Summer and winter,
Seedtime and harvest—
Eat and be glad!
Egypt and Nineveh,
Rome and Assyria,
Were but my pensioners;
I am the permanent
Still stand my kingdoms—
Still wave the cornfields—
Seeming but alive indeed,
Master of Life am I—
I am the plow!

—W. G. Hale